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PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CASEY/THE CONNECTION



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Brother and sister Victor and Alenette hold up their newly checked out books to read and add to their Summer Reading Program logs at the Lorton Library.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Sexual Battery, Abduction Charged

Fairfax County police have charged a Lorton man with abduction, sexual battery and two counts of impersonating a law enforcement officer. He is Kedrick Evans, 48, of 7317 Ardglass Drive.

In May, police began receiving reports from employees of local massage parlors that, on more than one occasion, a customer had displayed what he claimed were law enforcement credentials from the FBI. Furthermore, at least one employee alleged

that this same person sexually assaulted her on June 24.

Using leads and information provided by the alleged victims, investigators were able to identify a suspect and determined he was not an FBI employee. On June 25, police arrested Evans. They believe there may potentially be more victims and urge anyone with information regarding this case to contact Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org, text "TIP187" plus a message to CRIMES/274637 or call police at 703-691-2131.

Countywide Transit Network Study

The Fairfax County Department of Trans-

portation is conducting the Countywide Transit Network Study to determine the type of transit systems needed to accommodate forecasted growth throughout the county over the next several decades.

The study has developed a proposed concept plan for where Metrorail should be extended, where light-rail systems are appropriate, and where dedicated lanes that allow buses to move faster could go.

The study will also recommend how the system can be phased in and funded over time.

The public is invited to participate in the study's third public meeting and workshop to discuss the proposed High Quality Transit Network (HQTN) concept.

It's slated for Wednesday, July 10, in rooms 4 and 5 of the Fairfax County Gov-

ernment Center.

There'll be an open-house format from 6-9 p.m., with a 20-minute presentation at 7 p.m.

The public meeting will present preliminary recommendations for the HQTN corridors and describe the network's benefits for the county and its residents.

For more information, see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/2050transitstudy and join the conversation online via the IdeaScale discussion board at www.fairfaxcountydott.ideascale.com/. The next steps in the study will be to respond to the commentary received on the proposed concept, consider and incorporate potential revisions and develop final study recommendations this fall.

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NEWS

Del. David Bulova (D-37) addresses his fellow delegates in the lower house of the Virginia General Assembly during a session in February.



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION



State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), (sitting, far right), discusses a bill in the Senate chamber of the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond in February, near the end of the session.

When a Bill Becomes a Law

On July 1, sales taxes go up for Fairfax County residents.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

What happens in Richmond usually stays in Richmond during the General Assembly's annual legislative session.

Until the first of July, when what happened in Richmond becomes the law.

Based on low voter turnout for state representatives, most of Fairfax County's one million plus residents pay little attention to what their state legislators do or don't do in Richmond each year.

"Bills get passed in the blink of an eye, and what gets passed really does affect your day-to-day life," said Delegate David Bulova (D-37.)

He pointed out that nearly 850 bills were passed into law during the 2012 session, including bitterly-debated legislation requiring a woman to have an ultrasound before an abortion, and the repeal of the "one handgun a month" law, which eliminated Virginia's 19-year ban on the purchase of more than one handgun a month.

Bulova had several legislative wins this session, including a bill that would make texting and driving a primary offense.

"We needed to at least make it clear that you risk a reckless driving offense if you text and drive," Bulova said.

Transportation funding dominated much of the discussion this year, and caused the most heartburn for many legislators. On the

last day of the 2013 session, state legislators struck a bipartisan 11th hour deal for a comprehensive transportation funding plan, the first long-term plan in 27 years.

Most local legislators praised the bill, which is projected to raise more than \$3.5 billion for roads and rails over five years and nearly \$900 million annually after 2018. Northern Virginia gets hundreds of millions from the state, including \$300 million committed to complete Metro's Silver Line extension to Dulles International Airport.

"We needed to at least make it clear that you risk a reckless driving offense if you text and drive."

—Del. David Bulova (D-37)

State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) was one of a handful of Democrats who voted against the deal, arguing that the new taxes are "discriminatory against Northern Virginia. ... The bottom line is we did need new revenue for transportation. We just went about it the wrong way."

"If we had not seized the moment, I couldn't see another path forward in the foreseeable future to get a meaningful transportation package through a split General Assembly and then the governor,"

said Bulova during a legislative wrap-up session for constituents in the Braddock district in April. "While this wasn't a perfect package, it also wasn't a something or nothing deal either."

Del. Vivian Watts (D-39), considered a "transportation wonk" by her peers—she served as Virginia's Secretary of Transportation—has argued that not having the transportation deal would have been "catastrophic."

"The \$300 million that is raised here will stay here for local and regional priorities," Watts said.

Following is a list of legislation affecting Fairfax County residents that became law on Monday, July 1. For more information on a particular bill, visit the Legislative Information System at <http://leg1.state.va.us/lis.htm>.

Transportation Taxes and Fees (HB 2313)

Statewide Provisions:

- ❖ Replaces 17.5 cents per gallon tax on gasoline and diesel with a 3.5 percent tax on gas and 6 percent tax on diesel.

- ❖ Increases the automobile sales tax from 3 percent to 4.15 percent.

- ❖ Increases the state sales tax from 5 percent to 5.3 percent.

- ❖ Increases the state General Fund transfer to transportation from 0.5 percent to 0.675 percent.

- ❖ Increases the fee for alternative fuel vehicles to \$64.

Regional Provisions:

- ❖ Increases sales tax in Northern Virginia by 0.7 percent, for a total of 6 percent.

- ❖ Imposes 2 percent transient

occupancy tax.

- ❖ Imposes a congestion relief fee [grantors tax] of \$0.15/\$100 valuation.

- ❖ Repeals the local option to enact a 1 percent income tax by referendum.

Traffic Safety

- ❖ Texting and Driving (HB 1907/SB 1222). Driving while texting is now a traffic infraction punishable, for a first offense, by a fine of \$125 and, for a second or subsequent offense, by a fine of \$250.

- ❖ Driving under 18 (SB 1165). The holder of a provisional driver's license under age 18 is not authorized to operate a motor vehicle with more than one passenger who is less than 21 years old unless the driver is accompanied by a parent or person acting in loco parentis who is occupying a seat beside the driver.

School Safety

- ❖ School Emergency Response (HB 2345). This bill requires the Virginia Center for School Safety, in conjunction with the Department of State Police, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the Department of Education, to develop a model critical incident response training program for public school personnel and those providing services to schools.

- ❖ School Safety Audits (HB 2346). This bill requires each school, in its annual school safety audit, to complete a school inspec-

tion walk-through using a standardized checklist provided by the Virginia Center for School Safety, which will incorporate crime prevention through environmental design principles. Each completed walk-through checklist will be available to the chief law enforcement officer of the locality upon request.

- ❖ Firearms Safety (SB 1378). Anyone convicted of the "strawman" purchase of a firearm, with the intent to resell or transport a firearm outside of Virginia, is now guilty of a Class 4 felony and will be sentenced to a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment to one year.

Other Bills

- ❖ HB 1990 allows localities to impose a \$250 annual license tax for drivers who do not display license plates issued by the commonwealth, and who are not already exempt from displaying license plates.

- ❖ HB 2175 authorizes the governor to request federal funds to construct a new veterans care center in Northern Virginia, and requires the state treasurer to issue a short-term treasury loan in an amount up to \$28.5 million for the state share of construction costs, once the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that federal funds will be allocated for the new center.

- ❖ HB 2341 provides that a person who is qualified to register to vote may apply to register to vote by electronic means authorized by the State Board of Elections.

New Leader at Robinson's Helm

Matt Eline is named school's principal; will retain Meier as football coach.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

There's a new person at the helm of Robinson Secondary School—one well equipped for the job. He's Matt Eline, who was an assistant principal at Fairfax High for four years and principal of Rocky Run Middle School the past three years.

He found out June 21 that the school board approved his appointment, and it was announced last Monday, June 24, at both schools. His first official day at Robinson will be July 8.

"I've loved being principal at Rocky Run—it's been very fulfilling—and I'll miss the relationships I've built with the parents, students and teachers," said Eline. "But I'm really excited for a new challenge, and I can't think of a better place to be than Robinson Secondary."

Raised in the Berkshires, in western Massachusetts, Eline initially wanted to be a doctor. He did a pre-internship at a hospital, but discovered he didn't like blood. However, he enjoyed working with people, so his father—who taught chemistry—suggested he take an education class at the University of Massachusetts. Part of it was observing teachers in school, and he was hooked.

"There's a certain adrenaline rush when you develop a lesson and see children learn it and the light bulb go on," said Eline. "There's such satisfaction working with kids and seeing that. It's incredibly rewarding, and that's what appealed to me."

HE BEGAN by teaching middle school science in Massachusetts and then spent two years in the Peace Corps, teaching five sub-



Matt Eline's first day as Robinson's new principal will be July 8.

jects at Mogol High School in Papua, New Guinea. Being there, he said, made him appreciate American culture and values even more and gave him a better understanding of different cultures. Said Eline: "You realize diversity's a good thing."

He then taught science at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Arlington and biology at Hylton High in Woodbridge. Next, he designed and implemented the first virtual high school for Prince William County Public Schools and, as its principal, he nurtured the growth of 14 online teachers.

But Eline missed interacting with students so, from 2003-2006, he served as assistant principal at Brentsville District High School. Then came the positions at Fairfax and Rocky Run.

Among other things at Fairfax, he was responsible for the academic achievement, administration and discipline for all 11th-graders; as a result, he reduced the number of expulsions and suspensions there for three consecutive years. And under his leadership at Rocky Run, several teams of math and science students won state and national

championships, and the school, itself, received the Governor's Award for Educational Excellence, all three years.

Eline's wife Belinda teaches music at a Prince William County elementary school. He's also a dad to four boys, stepsons in college, plus twins, almost 7. The move to Robinson was a family decision, and Eline says they all support it.

"I'm going to one of the best secondary schools in the state," he said. "It has a great staff, supportive community and motivated students. And one of the things that attracted me was to have a bigger impact on students all the way from seventh through 12th grades."

A middle-school principal just has two years with the students. "By the time you get to know them, they're leaving," said Eline. "So this gives me a longer time to establish relationships. I'm especially interested in that transition from eighth to ninth grade. It's difficult for some students, and I believe I have the experience and interest to help kids with it."

"It takes a lot to run a school nowadays, and making it a high-flying school is even more challenging."

—Matt Eline

"If they're going to become disillusioned, negative or disengaged from high school, it's in ninth grade," he explained. "So we've got to make really sure they feel like they belong and we can hook them in and engage them in education. With Robinson Secondary, it's built in, and I think it helps that I've worked in both high schools and middle schools."

Eline's also ready to work with more students and staff and a larger community. Rocky Run has 1,024 students, but Robinson has 2,700 in secondary school and 1,200 in middle school, for nearly 4,000 total.

Furthermore, he's looking forward to be-

ing at a school with sports teams. "Sports bring out students' passions when they feel deeply about participating," he said. "And for a lot of students, that's what keeps them interested in being in school. They also learn a great deal from being on a team."

Speaking of sports, Eline has news about Robinson's head varsity football coach. The job, open since November, will go to Danny Meier—whose former teams won three state championships and who became Robinson's interim coach after recently retiring as its principal.

"Absolutely," said Eline, adding, "He's got to win, though. Danny's a legend and he makes a difference for kids. He's only a positive, and I'm looking forward to picking his brain about the school, since he was the principal for 10 years. I think he was an incredible leader, and I'll try to keep some of the fun and motivating traditions he started. Coming to a new school, it's important to be a great listener, learn the traditions and take time to get to know people."

BESIDES LEARNING about Robinson's culture and community, he also believes it's important to be diligent about bullying. But, he said, "I need to find out what's already in place there to address it." He also plans to make sure his goals and visions are reflected in the administration team which, in turn, will relay them to the teachers.

Eline received several e-mails from Robinson staff, congratulating him on his selection as principal. And last Friday, June 28, he was introduced to teachers, parents and students there and received a warm welcome.

He said being a principal is the hardest job he's ever had, but also the best. "It's demanding; everybody wants your time and attention," said Eline. "It takes a lot to run a school nowadays, and making it a high-flying school is even more challenging. But I love meeting the students, being part of their lives as they grow up and being a positive influence on them."

SCHOOL NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Michelle "Mimi" Ashley-Dwyer Lynch, graduate of Robinson Secondary School, graduated Summa Cum Laude from New York College of Pennsylvania with a Bachelors of Science degree in bi-



Michelle "Mimi" Ashley-Dwyer Lynch

ology and a minor in theatre. She will be attending the University of Virginia Medical School.

Two Springfield graduates recently received degrees from Boston University: **Helen L. McCarthy**, Theatre Artisan in Artisan and **Lauren E. Drake**, Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience.

Martine Voltaire of Fairfax Station, mother of Chancey, age 4, and

Tristan, age 1, is the winner of a \$5,000 college savings account from Virginia529. The award was part of the 2013 529 Day campaign to increase awareness of tax-advantaged 529 plans as savings vehicles for higher education.

John William Forneris of Clifton, graduated magna cum laude from Wake Forest University School of Law on Sunday, May 19, in Wait Chapel.

Bradlee Rogers of South County High School accepted an honors scholarship awarded by

Northern Virginia Community College.

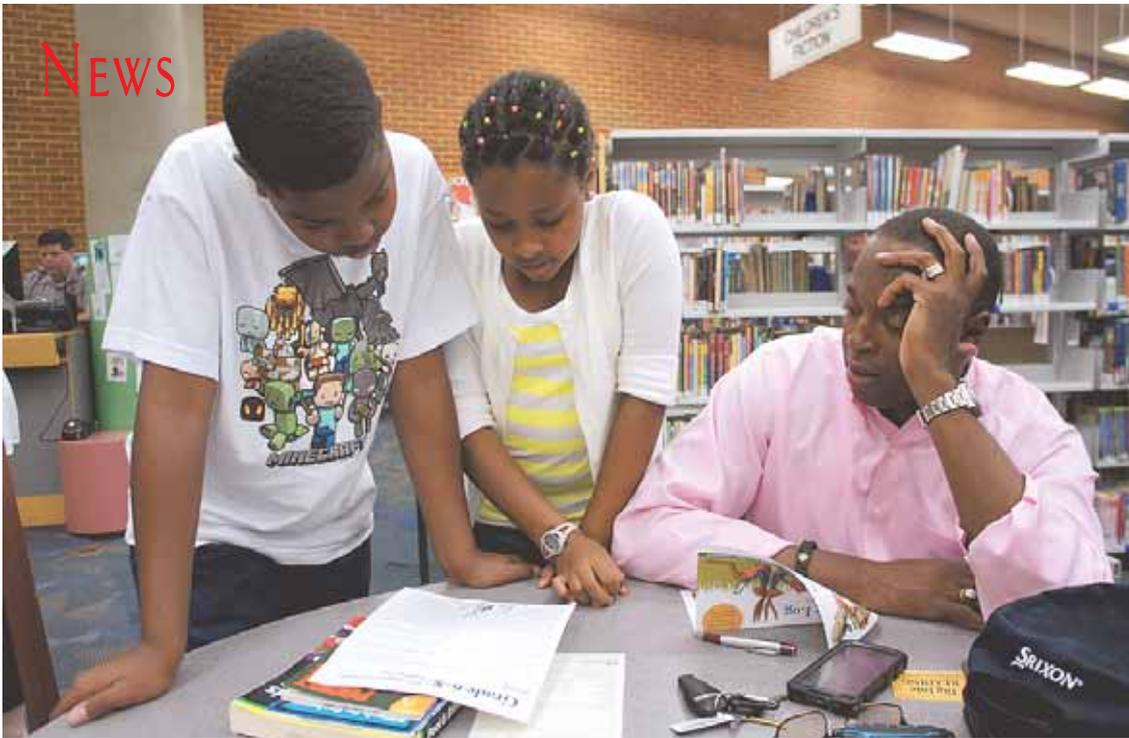
Graduate **Alex Zorychtao** of Clifton, along with Shaun Moshasha and Rachel Smith of the University of Virginia have dedicated the next year to a new type of diagnostic test, Phage Flag. This test could help prevent the Whooping cough and is a finalist for a \$100,000 Coulter Translational Research Grant.

Daniel Weisz of Clifton has been appointed by the 10th Districts Class of 2017 service acad-

emies and will attend the United States Air Force Academy.

Kyra E. Rodio of Lake Braddock Secondary School received the National Merit Hillsdale College Scholarship of Merit Scholarship Awards by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Brendan O'Connor, junior at Robinson Secondary School has been selected among 500 attendees at West Point's prestigious Summer Leaders Experience in June.



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH CASEY/THE CONNECTION

Siblings Joshua and Daria check out the Suggested Reading lists at the Lorton Library with their father Dwight. They participate in the Summer Reading Program every summer.

Children 'Dig Into Reading' At Lorton Library

The library launches summer reading program.

BY ELIZABETH CASEY
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County "Dig Into Reading" Summer Reading Program is currently in full swing at Lorton Library, where many children and young adults' names hang on the wall indicating that they have met their reading log goal and received their coveted coupon book. The program began on June 18 and will run through the summer, challenging preschool through 12th grade students to read or surpass a set amount of books before the beginning of the school year and receive a coupon book filled with free and discounted offers. A diverse array of special events are also offered for all ages at Fairfax County Libraries during the summer and are in high demand according to Lorton Library's branch manager, Gari Piehal.

Children, teens and their families can be seen in swarms post-workday, signing up for the program and carting books away to add to their summer reading logs. Piehal says the elementary age children are "crazy about" the Lego series and graphic novels are very popular now for teens and young adults. Since the program



Circulation Manager Laura Bumgarner checks out some of the children's books waiting to be checked out at the Lorton Library.

started just a couple weeks ago, Piehal says there are fewer and fewer books on the shelves day by day, most likely due to this popular program. Laura Bumgarner, the circulation manager at Lorton Library, says she has noticed that all series books seem to be popular, including the Star Wars series and Dora Series, and the "New Book" area also sees a lot of traffic.

Joshua and Daria, a seventh and sixth grade brother and sister pair, were found scouting for books of a series on Monday evening, July 1, including Daria's favorite "The Series of Unfortunate Events" and Joshua's favorite the "Star Wars" series. Both were searching for books to read for an upcoming vacation and were planning on reading well beyond the eight-book goal of the Summer Reading Program. Their father Dwight

signs them up every year in order to exercise and maintain their advanced reading levels they hold during the school year. Siblings Victor and Alenette are both early elementary school students and are also working on their summer reading logs. Victor is excited about reading the "Magic Tree House" series and Alenette loved reading a book from the "Katie Kazoo" series by Nancy Krulik.

While series are very popular at the Lorton Library this summer, so are the events that sponsors will put on throughout the summer. Piehal lists the variety of teen events that were added to the list this summer and thinks they will be "a great addition" to these high demand programs. A full list and calendar of events and the opportunity to sign up can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

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HOT-Lanes and No Metro for I-66?

Did you miss the public discussion and input? So did we.

One day when I was stuck in traffic on I-66, I was briefly entertained by the license plate of the vehicle in front of me. “66 SUCKS,” it read.

No question, commuting on I-66 is a bear. But last week, Gov. Bob McDonnell issued a request for the private sector to make improvements on the 25 miles between Route 15 and the Beltway.

A press release Thursday, June 27, announced that the “Commonwealth is looking for the best and brightest ideas, suggestions and recommendations from the private sector to transform I-66 from a highly congested corridor to a multi-modal transportation facility that moves traffic and people more efficiently.”

So far so good. But the devil is in the details, which call to:

- ❖ Widen I-66 by building additional general purpose lanes that would not be tolled

- ❖ Convert the existing high occupancy vehicle lane into either a one or two lane (in each direction) facility that would be free to carpoolers, buses and emergency vehicles. The HOV lanes would operate similar to the I-495 Express Lanes, which were completed late 2012 or the I-95 Express Lanes, which are under construction.

- ❖ Locate Bus Rapid Transit in the median of I-66 extending west from Vienna to Haymarket.

Wait, Bus Rapid Transit is the only transit option in the request. Metrorail, VRE, light rail, all eliminated from consideration with the push

of a “send” button.

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority expressed “grave concern regarding the lack of transit concepts moving forward for additional consideration.” The NVTA said in a letter to McDonnell: “Although Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is on the list of seven concepts being recommended for Tier 2, the absence of Metrorail extensions, VRE extensions and light rail transit is surprising. ... We are concerned by the exclusion of these transit options for additional study, as this could preclude development of these options in the future and is in conflict with existing and planned transit facilities for the I-66 Corridor.”

This specific invitation to the private sector would stop consideration of any transit except bus rapid transit. While bus rapid transit should certainly be considered, this route could be a logical extension of the Metro Orange Line past Vienna, and VRE is also operating in the area. This is not the place to stop the consideration of transit options.

Also of concern is the fact that the 495 Express Lanes have not operated long enough to be fairly evaluated. Use of the lanes has been significantly below projections, and revenue has fallen short as well.

Nationwide, most HOT-Lanes projects are significantly underperforming projections. Turning over tolls for 75-80 years to a private partner is questionable, and the public needs to understand that the commonwealth invested heavily in the 495-Express Lanes as well.

The 495 Express Lanes were “funded with an extraordinary package of private equity, state funds and federal credit assistance, under a public-private partnership agreement signed on Dec. 20, 2007,” according to Public Works Financing newsletter. “Key to making the numbers work were the large contribution

from VDOT and the flexible federal credit assistance.”

The agreement includes no limit on the amount of tolls, “protecting” the private investor from “excessive” HOV use (use of the lanes is free if there are three or more people in the vehicle), and revenue sharing with the commonwealth only after the project has met the optimistic expected return on investment of 13 percent.

There have been significant benefits to the 495 Express Lanes project including replacement of aging bridges and interchanges and additional capacity in the regular lanes. But we have no idea what those benefits will cost in the long run.

McDonnell should heed the request of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and pull back from the current request. Other transit options must be on the table, although bus rapid transit could still emerge as the best option. And an impartial analysis of how high occupancy toll lanes are working so far, and what Virginia’s obligations are if they do not meet expectation, is a must before going forward on I-66.

At presstime, early this week because of the Independence Day holiday, McDonnell released a draft 2013 Virginia PPTA Pipeline, calling for public comment between now and Aug. 1. Ten “candidate projects” include; I-66 Corridor Improvements; Air Rights Development (VDOT); I-64 HOV to HOT Conversion; I-495 Express Lanes Extension; Cell Tower/Fiber Optic Opportunities. Ten conceptual projects include: Advertising/Sponsorship Opportunities (VDOT); Parking Facilities Enhancements (VDOT); Rest Area Enhancements.

See www.vappta.org.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

Job Training Key to Combating Homelessness

BY MARY AGEE
PRESIDENT AND CEO /NORTHERN
VIRGINIA FAMILY SERVICE

During their last round of budget hearings, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors heard from Marlena, a domestic violence survivor who had to decide between the “security” of her home or the personal safety of her family. Upon moving her two sons into emergency housing, Marlena received the wraparound counseling and care services offered to shelter residents. After successive cycles of having, losing and searching for jobs, Marlena heard about Northern Virginia Family Service’s (NVFS) Training Futures job development program and decided to register.

Over the course of six months, Marlena learned office skills, etiquette and ethics; how to prepare a resume and interviewing skills; and completed an internship giving her real-world experience. She was initially hired by a nonprofit as a receptionist, and has since earned a promotion doing client services.

She even continued her education at Northern Virginia Community College and earned a certificate in Business Information Technology. But most importantly, with steady income, she was able to secure an apartment in Northern Virginia for her and her two boys. NVFS is committed to ending homelessness.

Nothing is more critical to the fabric of a family than the safety and stability of a place to call

home. Our consortium of non-profit partners and commitment from local government, such as Fairfax County’s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, have invested resources to make sure our neighbors in need can help themselves. These services are generally a combination of emergency and temporary housing, mental health counseling, access of health care, food, etc. But without the ability to provide for one’s family, all of the services listed above become Band-Aids to the greater need of economic self-sufficiency.

The United Way of the National Capital Area recently released “Community Snapshot: A Report on the Economic and Social Well-Being of the National Capital Area,” prepared by the George Mason University Center for Re-

gional Analysis. This report forecasts that more than 60 percent of high-demand jobs in our area will require a high school degree, GED, vocational education training or on-the-job training. That’s where a program like Training Futures really makes a difference in our community. For Marlena and 1,500 of her fellow graduates, this job training program has empowered individuals and families to take control of their lives and become contributing members of our community.

Although Training Futures is not a housing program, it remains an important piece of the puzzle when considering how to end homelessness. For more information on how you can become involved, please visit www.nvfs.org/trainingfutures.

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THE CONNECTION

WELLBEING

Love After 50: Baby Boomers Need Romance Too

Couple chronicles their online dating experience in new book.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

On a recent Wednesday evening, Mindy Mitchell and her partner, Edward Land, found themselves not only sharing some of the intimate details of their courtship, but also offering advice to other baby boomers who were looking for love. Mitchell, a bespectacled design consultant with cropped, chestnut hair, and Land, a tall, rugged longshoreman with a graying beard and matching receding hairline, were at One More Page Books in Arlington, to read from their newly released book on online dating for boomers.

"There were women who'd had intriguing experiences," said Mitchell. "They asked questions like how to know when someone puts something in [an online profile] that isn't true or not true any-

more. One woman said she found a guy who said he was active, but when she met him, he was using a walker."

Sixty-one-year-old Mitchell of Reston and 63-year-old Land of Hampton recently published "Lube of Life: A Tribute to Sex, Love and the Pursuit of Happiness in the Boomer Age," a tome that chronicles their online dating adventure. "They hope their story will inspire other single baby boomers who are searching for mates. "Dating in your 60s is a lot different than dating in the 1960s, to be sure," said Mitchell, who works as a design consultant at Sun Design Remodeling Specialists, Inc. in Burke. "Our message is one of hope and the courage to try one more time. Life is just too short."

Land, whose wife died prematurely of heart failure after 22 years of marriage, decided to try online dating because he was lonely: "I had been on my own for a year and

a half and I missed the company of a sweetheart. I've always enjoyed the company of ladies."

Mitchell, who has been divorced twice, noticed Land's online profile, and though she found him attractive, the two became only friends at first. "Mindy and I were just buddies because she lived too far away," said Land.

"We became friends to help each other and give each other dating advice," Mitchell added. "We ended up having all of these long conversations and connected energetically. Then one day, I blurted out, 'Why don't we meet?'"

The book chronicles the evolution of their relationship from chums to lovers through a series of emails, text messages and

dialogues. "They share some of their innermost apprehensions with readers, their insecurities, thoughts and feelings, such as their first face-to-face meeting."

"I decided that I'd really like to have sex one more time before I die," said Mitchell. "We set up this time to meet for sex. If sex is like riding a bicycle, I wanted Edward to be my training wheels." She does offer a caveat, however: "That is not like me and I don't want to put it out there as a recommendation. You have to be careful. I had a background check [done] on him before we met."

When publisher Roseann S. Lentin of Turn the Page Publishing first heard Mitchell and Land's story, she knew it was a book in

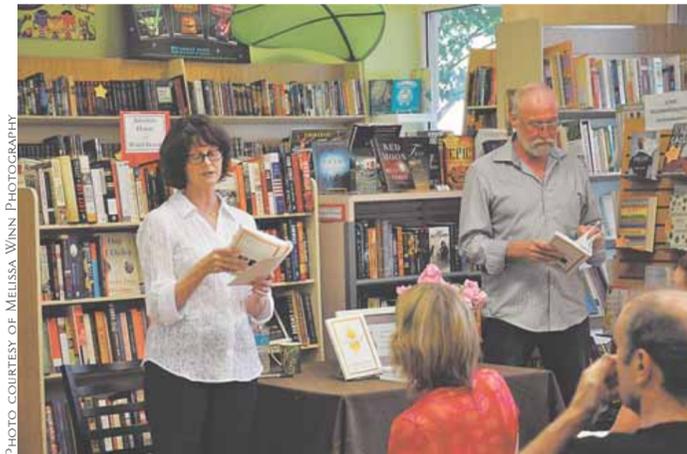
the making. "Now that baby boomers have a life expectancy that is now in the 90s, they are ready to have more of a revolutionary spirit," said Lentin. "The book was to be an inspiration for people to get back on the horse and get out there again."

Mitchell and Land say it is important to share details of their relationship in order to debunk some of the myths around online dating in one's golden years. "I think many baby boomers are uncomfortable with it," said Mitchell. "We talked to so many people of our age. There were so many angry people who said, 'Why do I have to go online to do this?' For a woman, it is more about facing your own fears. Men often want younger women."

Ioana Boie, Ph.D., an assistant professor of counseling at Marymount University in Arlington says romantic relationships are important as people age. She also believes in removing some of the trepidation that often surrounds such discussions. "I think romantic relationships are a human need. We are relational beings," she said.

"Dating in your 60s is a lot different than dating in the 1960s, to be sure. Our message is one of hope and the courage to try one more time. Life is just too short."

—Mindy Mitchell, coauthor of "Lube of Life: A Tribute to Sex, Love and the Pursuit of Happiness in the Boomer Age"



Mindy Mitchell of Reston and Edward Land of Hampton share expertise from their new book, "Lube of Life: A Tribute to Sex, Love and the Pursuit of Happiness in the Boomer Age," during a reading at One More Page Books in Arlington.

"I don't think that people reach 70 and say, 'I don't want to be involved with anyone.' I believe romantic relationships mold who we are, offer support and help us be well."

John Martin of the online dating service Senior Match.com believes that an increasing number of those older than 50 are open to online dating as a way of finding a romantic partner. "I myself have met some terrific women online," he said in a statement. "In fact, it is now my preferred way to meet women by far. Plus, I personally know many

people who have found their husbands, wives, boyfriends or girlfriends through an online dating service. This is one of the reasons I believe that the older population is feeling better about using the Internet to find someone."

Mitchell and Land underscore the importance of safety and honesty when using online dating websites. "There are people who are predatory and pick up on people's insecurities. Do a background check, especially as a woman," Mitchell said.

Land recommends a straightforward approach: "Be honest with yourself and the online community," he said. "It is pointless to tell people things that are not true. Have faith in yourself. Decide what is important to you, things you won't accept [and] what's negotiable."

Land and Mitchell are on a whirlwind tour promoting their book and sharing their wisdom. "The bottom line is not lose hope, and don't give up," said Land. "If you don't buy a ticket you can't win."

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CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. For more entertainment events in the county, go to: <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/may/22/fairfax-county-calendar/>.

FRIDAY/JULY 5

Kings Park Band. 7:30-8:30 p.m., at Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. The Kings Park Band has grown to a full concert band of over 55 adults with a paid professional conductor. www.kingsparkband.org.

SATURDAY/JULY 6

Yoga on the Quad. 8 a.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A free, 45-minute long yoga class held outside; bring your own yoga mat. workhousearts.org/events/general-events/free-yoga-quad-0.

Frank Solivan and Dirty Kitchen. 7-8 p.m., at Workhouse Arts Center at Lorton, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Solivan, who sings lead vocals and plays mandolin and fiddle, performed for six years with the U.S. Navy's bluegrass group before leaving the service to play the civilian bluegrass circuit. www.dirtykitchenband.com.

Patriotic Fireworks Show. 9 p.m., at the Quad, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Bring your family, friends, blankets and lawn chairs and come watch as the colors light up the sky. 703-584-2900 or <http://workhousearts.org/events/general-events/patriotic-fireworks-show>.

FRIDAY/JULY 12

The Hot Society Orchestra Of Washington. 7:30-8:30 p.m., at



Rock-N-Kids is a summer program filled with singing and dancing held every other Friday. The next Rock-N-Kids is Friday, July 12.

Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. The Hot Society Orchestra of Washington performs dance music of the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's, re-creating the great sounds of early jazz-dance bands. www.hotsociety.net.

SATURDAY/JULY 13

Yoga on the Quad. 8 a.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A free, 45-minute long yoga class held outside; bring your own yoga mat. workhousearts.org/events/general-events/free-yoga-quad-0.

5th Annual Ice Cream Social Fundraiser. Noon-4 p.m., at the W-8, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The sale of handmade ice cream bowls created by the students, ceramic artists and instructors of the art center; music from the Backyard Blues Band playing and pony rides and fire station tours are also part of the event. \$15 per bowl. 703-584-2900 or workhousearts.org/events/visual-arts/5th-annual-ice-cream-social-fundraiser.

2nd Saturday Art Walk. 6-9 p.m., Workhouse, 601 Ox Rd, Lorton. This art walk showcases the diverse work of more than 100 visual artists in a unique historic venue. workhousearts.org/events/visual-arts/2nd-saturday-art-walk-10.

360 Degrees of Post-Traumatic Stress Reception. 6-9 p.m., at the Workhouse in the Vulcan Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Works from soldiers in transition at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, including sculptures, prints and more made from veterans participating in the Combat Paper Project. workhousearts.org/events/visual-arts/360-degrees-post-traumatic-stress.

Claire Lynch. 7-8 p.m., at Workhouse Arts Center at Lorton, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The current Claire Lynch Band is a quartet that perfectly interprets the beauty, subtlety and genre of Claire's music. www.clairelynch.com.

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NEWS

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

A patriotic display of fireworks at the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center.

Let the Sparks Fly

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

So. It's July 4, 2013. Independence Day. A federal holiday celebrating our freedom from Great Britain. The National Day of the United States.

And you have nothing planned.

Your children have dreams of fireworks in their head, your neighbors' homes are festooned with patriotic flair, and your friends already have their coolers packed and lawn chairs ready for their memorable 4th of July celebration.

It's not too late for you to have a fun-filled 4th of July too. We've compiled a list of the best local events, close to your home and mostly free!

City of Fairfax

Day-long Independence Day events include a parade, fireworks, history, firefighters and more.

❖ For additional information on Independence Day activities, call 703-385-7858 or visit the city's web site at www.fairfaxva.gov.

Rich with Revolutionary and Civil War history, the City of Fairfax has always made the Founding Fathers proud with a day of family-friendly, old-fashioned events capped by an explosion of fireworks that draws more than 15,000 people to Fairfax High School's stadium each year.

Many families have made the celebration an annual tradition for generations.

"We come back to the event every year to dance, eat snowballs and get water-soaked," said Jennifer Loeb. Loeb and her sister, Kerry Petrauskas, grew up in the City of Fairfax and travel from Bristow every year to celebrate the city's Independence Day events with their family.

"Our parents still live here, and we all get together for this event. What could be more American and fun than this," Loeb said.

City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne said the City of Fairfax goes the extra mile to make the fireworks finale a spectacular event. "It gets better every year," Silverthorne said.

Following is a detailed list of events for the City of Fairfax Independence Day celebration:

❖ Independence Day Parade—10 a.m. at 4100 Chain Bridge Road, rain or shine.

Featuring marching bands, inflatable balloons, dancers, horses and clowns, the 47th annual Independence Day parade is colorful and entertaining. The parade loops around downtown Fairfax, along Chain Bridge Road, Main Street, University Drive and Armstrong Street. This year, eight high school marching bands from as far west as Nebraska and Minnesota join with the city's own Fairfax High School Marching Rebels. This year's grand marshal is the Honorable Quin S. Elson, a longtime community activist and Fairfax Police Youth Club (FPYC) volunteer. Elson is being recognized for his dedication and commitment to the community.

❖ "You Will Get Wet!" Old Fashioned Fireman's Day—12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive.

After the parade, watch area fire companies compete in this one-of-a-kind event—a favorite among locals—which includes the Battle of the Barrel and Lay-a-Line competition. During Lay-a-Line, a timed competition that simulates an emergency response to fire, fire engines race down University Drive, firefighters jump out of their trucks, lay hose lines and try to knock down targets with their water hoses—all in under 30 seconds. Battle of the Barrel is a reverse tug of war, in which an empty beer keg is suspended 12 feet in the air. Members utilize a 2 1/2-foot hose line to push the barrel to the opponent's side. Spectators are "warned" that they will get wet, and—on a typical sweltering July 4th—the warning is a crowd-pleaser. Also at the event are plenty of food, beverages and games.

❖ Evening Show and Fireworks—7 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run.

As the sun sets, enjoy music and dancing before the fireworks. The show features the City of Fairfax Band, and the popular cover band, GrooveLine, which plays favorites from the 1950s to today's current hits. A spectacular fireworks display will follow with a finale performance by GrooveLine



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

A City of Fairfax firefighter sprints to lay down a fire hose during the timed "Lay-a-Line" competition during the City of Fairfax's annual Old-Fashioned Fireman's Day event on July 4, 2012.

It's not too late to enjoy local 4th of July festivals, parades and fireworks.

until 10:30 pm. The rain date for the fireworks only is July 5. Items that may puncture the synthetic turf, smoking, alcohol and animals (except service animals) are not permitted on the football field.

❖ Historic Open Houses—Several historic properties will be open to the public on July 4, including the Fairfax Museum and Visitors Center from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 10209 Main Street and the Ratcliffe-Allison House, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 10386 Main Street.

Parking and Shuttle Information:

❖ Shuttle bus service for the parade runs from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. from George Mason University, Woodson High School and Fairfax United Methodist Church. Shuttles will return spectators to these locations after the parade.

❖ For the evening show and fireworks, public parking is available at Fairfax High School. Use shuttle buses available from 6 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. at Woodson High School, 9525 Main Street, to Fairfax High School. Shuttles will return spectators to Woodson High School after the fireworks until 11 p.m. On July 5th, rain date for fireworks only, shuttles are available from 7 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. at Woodson High School. Shuttles will return spectators to Woodson High School after the fireworks until 10:30 p.m. Handicapped parking is available at Fairfax High School. Event sponsors include Fairfax City Mall and 97.1 WASH-FM.

Lorton

Red, White and Blue Light Up the Sky with fireworks at the Workhouse Arts Center Saturday, July 6 at 7 p.m., 9601 Ox Road.

❖ For more information on performances, exhibitions, events and camps, visit www.workhousearts.org.

The Workhouse Arts Center will celebrate Independence Day with live music, a patriotic exhibition and a fireworks show on Saturday, July 6. Beginning at 7 p.m., enjoy a free Mount Vernon Nights concert, featuring the funky bluegrass style of Frank Solivan and Dirty Kitchen. Afterwards, swing with the City of Fairfax Band Swing Ensemble in the Rizer Pavilion at 8 p.m. Throughout the evening, stop by the lat-

est exhibition, 360 Degrees of Post-Traumatic Stress, and see works created by soldiers transitioning to civilian life. Bring kids, pals, blankets and lawn chairs to an evening that captures the patriotic spirit of this country.

"We're looking forward to an exciting evening of music and fun for the whole family on July 6, and we are grateful to our wonderful sponsors for providing a fireworks display again this year," said Joseph Wallen, director of performing arts at the Workhouse Arts Center. Fireworks at the Workhouse is sponsored by EnviroSolutions, Inc., 95 Express Lanes, Silver Diner restaurant and Sentara Healthcare.

Fairfax County Parks

Lake Fairfax Fireworks Spectacular—Lake Fairfax, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive at 9:15 p.m. Park opens at 7 a.m.; The Water Mine opens at 10 a.m.

❖ For more information, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lakefairfax/ or call 703-471-5415.

Lake Fairfax Park features an 18-acre lake and the family-friendly Water Mine, an outdoor swimming pool with water slides and a lazy river. The 476-acre park also features seasonal fishing, campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, party areas, a carousel and playground. On July 4, park grounds open at 7 a.m., and admission is free, so bring your family for a full day of fun. The Water Mine water park will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., but usually hits capacity very early, so plan accordingly. There will be vendors near the park's main office offering a variety of foods and dessert treats. The carousel and marina will be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. There is also a puppet show from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. near the carousel. Parking attendants will be directing traffic throughout the park. The fireworks show will begin at approximately 9:15 p.m. The fireworks are shot off over the lake so the view can be seen from almost any location in the park. The campgrounds are available for anyone wishing to stay overnight. Reservations are highly recommended and will be accepted as long as space is available.

SPORTS

Woodson Grad Smiga Headed To Radford Despite Injuries

Meghan Smiga's injury troubles at W.T. Woodson High School began her freshman year, when she tore the ACL in her right knee during basketball season. As a junior, she suffered a concussion during lacrosse season. As a senior, a car accident forced her to miss part of field hockey season. After she returned, Smiga tore the ACL in her right knee, forcing her to miss the rest of the field hockey campaign, along with indoor track and lacrosse seasons.

Despite two significant knee injuries, Smiga hasn't walked away from the playing field. In fact, the 2013 Woodson graduate is taking her game to the next level.

Smiga will play field hockey at Radford University in the fall. While she was robbed of most of her senior season due to injury, Smiga garnered first-team all-district, first-team all-region and second-team all-state honors during her time as a Cavalier.

Smiga participated in a Q and A with the Connection via email.

What made Radford the right fit for you?

Smiga: The location, school size, campus. The physical therapy program was a huge attraction, and the team and coach were very welcoming and friendly. I can't wait to spend my next four years there.

What position did you play in high school? What position will you play in college?

Smiga: I switched off and on with my high school and club teams between midfield and forward, wherever my coach wanted to play me. Even though I was recruited as a forward, the college level is a whole new game and I could end up anywhere on the field depending on where my coach thinks I would be most beneficial.

Any word on playing time as a freshman?

Smiga: There's never a guarantee, but when Aug. 15 rolls around and we start practicing, I will try my hardest to earn playing time.

What is your favorite memory of playing field hockey at Woodson?

Smiga: My favorite memory playing field hockey at Woodson would have to be my sophomore year. The year before, we graduated a lot of talented field hockey players that went off to play in college, so there were high expecta-

I'm looking forward to playing with and against really talented girls, learning more skills, having a faster-pace game and just being around new people.

— Meghan Smiga

tations. The season overall was just really intense and everyone took it very seriously and cared a lot, which made me love the sport even more.

What are you most looking forward to about the transition from high school to college?

Smiga: I'm looking forward to playing with and against really talented girls, learning more skills, having a faster-pace game and just being around new people.

At what age did you start playing field hockey? Did you imagine you'd one day play it in college?

Smiga: I started playing my freshman year. At first, I was set on playing soccer in college but that changed after my knee injury and playing club indoor hockey. I played for Rampage and it was really intense and people loved the sport and being around that attitude rubbed off on me. Also, Westfield coach Starr Karl, who is the best coach I've ever had and is highly respected, made me love the sport more and made me a better player in many ways. She definitely had a huge impact on me playing field hockey.

— JON ROETMAN



COURTESY PHOTO

Meghan Smiga (left), a 2013 graduate of W.T. Woodson High School, will play field hockey at Radford University.

Potomac/North Sends Off Talented Players

The Potomac/North U16 and U19 teams, full of Fairfax County players, both took home the Gold Medal Saturday and Sunday, June 22-23 the VA Commonwealth Games (The Virginia Olympics) for Field Hockey at the University of Virginia. Potomac/North competed against teams from around the state to take home the Gold and title of State Champions.

Coach Virginia White led both teams to victory. Star players on the team and recent graduates of county schools will go on to play at the college level in the fall. Sam Zelenack, a recent graduate of Fairfax High School, will go to play at Towson College in Maryland; Katie Clark of Marshall High School will play for and attend University of Massachusetts; and Sarah Betti of Herndon High School will play for Haverford College in Pennsylvania.

For more information about the Subway Commonwealth Games of Virginia Field Hockey, go to http://www.commonwealthgames.org/2013_Subway_Games/2013_Sports_Listing/Field_Hockey.htm.



The Potomac/North U19 team.



The Potomac/North U16 team.

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Fairfax \$520,000
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